

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (withdrawn): An apparatus for concentrating a vegetable-fruit product, said apparatus comprising:

 a concentration unit having an inlet, an outlet and a plurality of tubular membrane modules connected in series;

 a single-axis eccentric screw pump connected to said inlet of said concentration unit for supplying the vegetable-fruit product to said concentration unit; and

 another single-axis eccentric screw pump connected to said outlet of said concentration unit for discharging the vegetable-fruit product from said tubular membrane modules, said apparatus serving to cause the vegetable-fruit product to be concentrated by reverse osmosis by causing the vegetable-fruit product to flow down under a pressured condition to said concentration unit.

Claim 2 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 1 structured for causing the vegetable-fruit product to flow into said concentration in a single-pass process.

Claim 3 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the vegetable-fruit product includes at least one selected from the group consisting of seeds, epidermis and sarcocarp.

Claim 4 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 2 wherein the vegetable-fruit product includes at least one selected from the group consisting of seeds, epidermis and sarcocarp.

Claim 5 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 3 wherein said vegetable-fruit product is a processed tomato product.

Claim 6 (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said vegetable-fruit product is a processed tomato product.

Claim 7 (currently amended): A method of concentrating a ~~vegetable-fruit~~ vegetable and/or fruit product by reverse osmosis, said method comprising the steps of:

preparing a vegetable and/or fruit product that includes at least one selected from a group consisting of fruits and vegetables and at least one solid component selected from the group consisting of seeds, epidermis and sarcocarp;

causing ~~the vegetable-fruit~~ said vegetable and/or fruit product to flow down under a pressured condition to a concentration unit which comprises an inlet, an outlet and a plurality of tubular membrane modules connected in series;

supplying ~~the vegetable-fruit~~ said vegetable and/or fruit product to said tubular membrane modules through a single-axis eccentric screw pump which is attached to said inlet; and

discharging a concentrated product from said tubular membrane modules through another single-axis eccentric screw pump which is attached to said outlet.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The method of claim 7 wherein said ~~vegetable-fruit~~ vegetable and/or fruit product is caused to flow into said concentration unit in a single-pass process.

Claims 9 and 10 (cancelled).

Claim 11 (currently amended): The method of ~~claim-9~~ claim 7 wherein ~~the vegetable-fruit~~ said vegetable and/or fruit product contains said solid component in an amount of 30-60 weight %.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The method of ~~claim-10~~ claim 8 wherein the vegetable-fruit product contains said solid component in an amount of 30-60 weight %.

Claim 13 (original): The method of claim 11 wherein said reverse osmosis is carried out with pressure of 3-5MPa at said inlet, pressure of 1-3MPa at said outlet and pressure

difference greater than 1.5MPa between said inlet and said outlet.

Claim 14 (original): The method of claim 12 wherein said reverse osmosis is carried out with pressure of 3-5MPa at said inlet, pressure of 1-3MPa at said outlet and pressure difference greater than 1.5MPa between said inlet and said outlet.

Claim 15 (currently amended): The method of claim 13 wherein said ~~vegetable-~~
~~fruit~~ vegetable and/or fruit product is a processed tomato product.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The method of claim 14 wherein said ~~vegetable-~~
~~fruit~~ vegetable and/or fruit product is a processed tomato product.